

“Decentralizing Protected Area Management... The Mount Kitanglad Experience”

By: Adolino L. Saway Alyas Datu Makapukaw
Chair, Council of Elders Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural Park

Felix S. Mirasol, Jr.
Protected Area Superintendent

Introduction

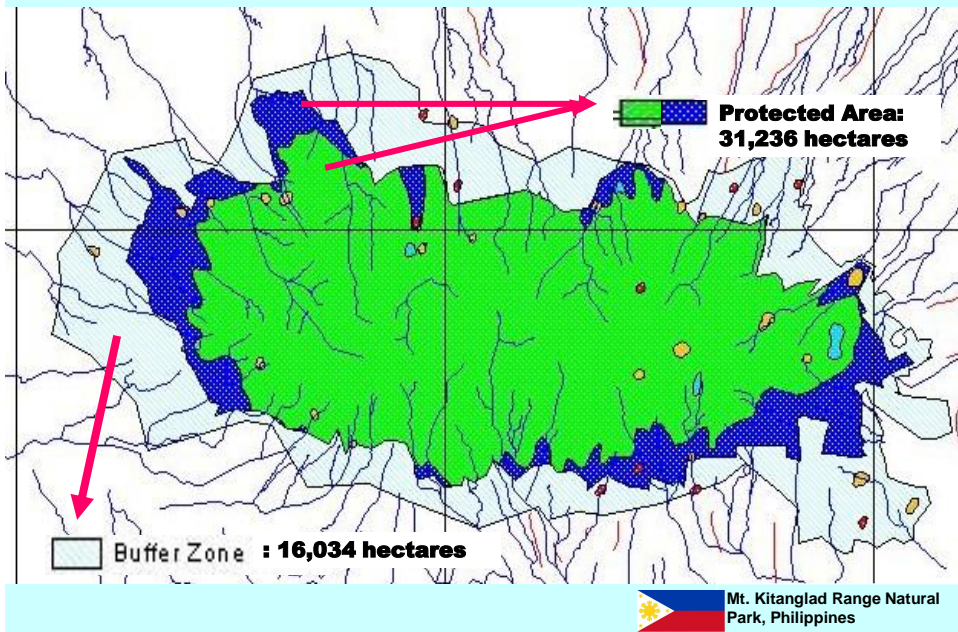
- *Mount Kitanglad Range Natural Park (MKRNP) is located in the Philippines, Island of Mindanao, Province of Bukidnon.*

This Site
Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural
Park



Introduction

Mt. Kitanglad Range Total Area: 47, 270 Hectares



MT. KITANGLAD RANGE PROTECTED AREA
*... comprising of seven (7) municipalities
and one (1) city.*



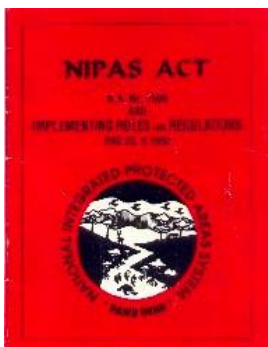
Decentralization Policies Affecting the Protected Area Management



Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural
Park, Philippines

Decentralization policies affecting the Protected area management

- *Republic Act 7586 otherwise known as the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) Act of 1992 provides ...*



... a paradigm shift in the Protected area management from the national government agencies through the Department of Environment & Natural Resources (DENR) to the local multisectoral body known as the Protected Area Management Board (PAMB).



Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural
Park, Philippines

Decentralization policies affecting the Protected area management

- *Republic Act 8371 known as the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA) of 1997 provides ...*



... policy direction that recognizes and promotes the rights of the Indigenous peoples in their ancestral domain land through the issuance of certificate of Ancestral Domain Title.



Decentralization policies affecting the Protected area management

- *Republic Act 7160 or Local Government Code...*



...the law that introduces changes in the political process in the country and transfer of power and authority from central institution to the Local level of government system.





*Community Based Forest Management
(CBFM) pursuant to Executive Order
No. 263, series of 1995...*

*All people-oriented programs had been
integrated and unified in the belief that an
efficient and sustained management of
forest lands and coastal areas would only
yield from responsible resource utilization
by organized and empowered local
communities.*



Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural
Park, Philippines

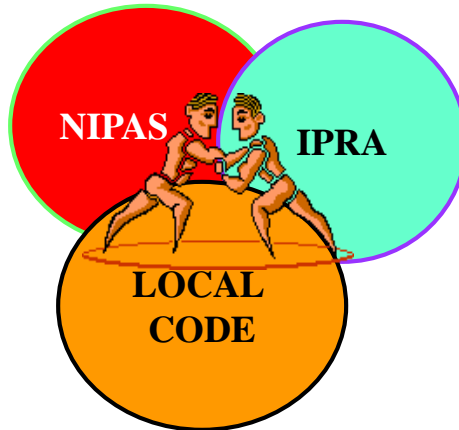
Challenges of Decentralization



Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural
Park, Philippines

Challenges of Decentralization

- *Lack of collaboration and overlapping of responsibilities are the major problems confronting among the government agencies in the implementation of the aforementioned laws.*



Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural
Park, Philippines

Challenges of Decentralization

- *A challenge to capacitate institution and local communities to assume decentralized responsibilities.*
- *Challenge for policy on resource access.*



Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural
Park, Philippines



Community participation in the decentralization policies



Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural
Park, Philippines

Community participation in the decentralization policies

A. Through the Mt. Kitanglad Council of Elders (COE)



Activity: Ritual

♥ *The Elders are represented
in the Protected Area
Management (PAMB) to
bring the concerns and
interests of the Indigenous
Peoples (IPs).*

♥ *They serve as advisers and experts in matters concerning
customary laws and practices and ensure that the PAMB
policies are in harmony with the indigenous knowledge
system.*



Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural
Park, Philippines

Community participation in the decentralization policies

A. *Through the Mt. Kitanglad Council of Elders (COE)*

- *Educated members of the tribe working to control Indigenous People's (IP) activities to advance their interests is a major challenge faced by the COE.*



Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural Park, Philippines

Community participation in the decentralization policies

- *Cultural mapping is therefore necessary in order to determine the genuine IP leaders of the park.*



Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural Park, Philippines

Community participation in the decentralization policies

B. Kitanglad Guard Volunteers (KGVs) with 280 members



- *KGV is a community-based natural resources and customary law protectors who are very effective in curtailing any form of destruction in the park.*



Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural Park, Philippines

Community participation in the decentralization policies

B. Kitanglad Guard Volunteers (KGVs) with 280 members

- *The provincial government provides US \$ 20,000 or 1 million pesos annually to support KGV protection activities and as incentives to the performing members.*



Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural Park, Philippines

B. Kitanglad Guard Volunteers (KGVs) with 280 members

- ***Tribal leaders who are opposed to Protected Areas Mngt. Board (PAMB) likewise organized their own tribal guards and treat the KGVs as their rivals.***



B. Kitanglad Guard Volunteers (KGVs with 280 members)

- ***There is now a greater pressure from the government through the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP)...***



...to guide and mediate conflicting interests of our natural resources protectors.



Roles of other Stakeholders

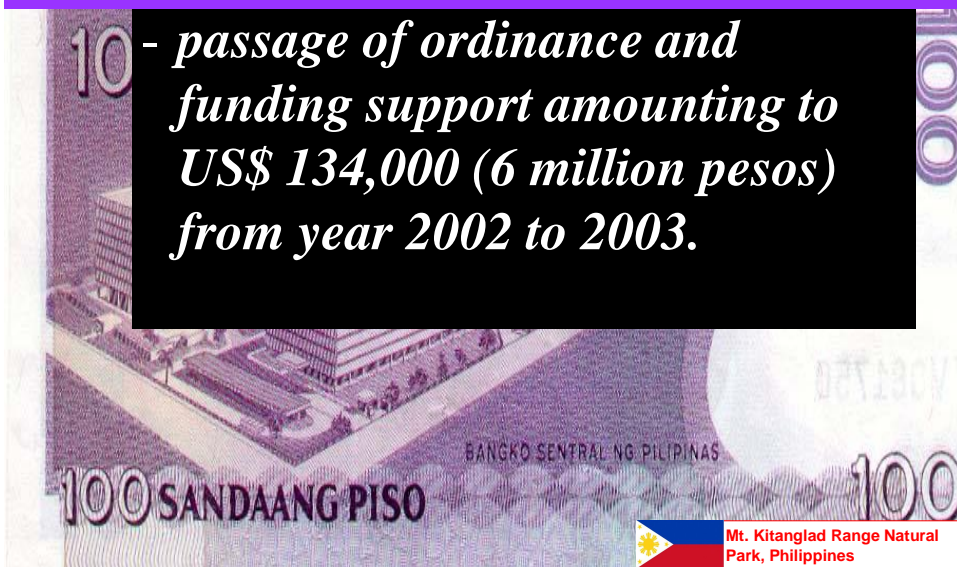


Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural
Park, Philippines

Roles of other Stakeholders

- ***Local Government Units***

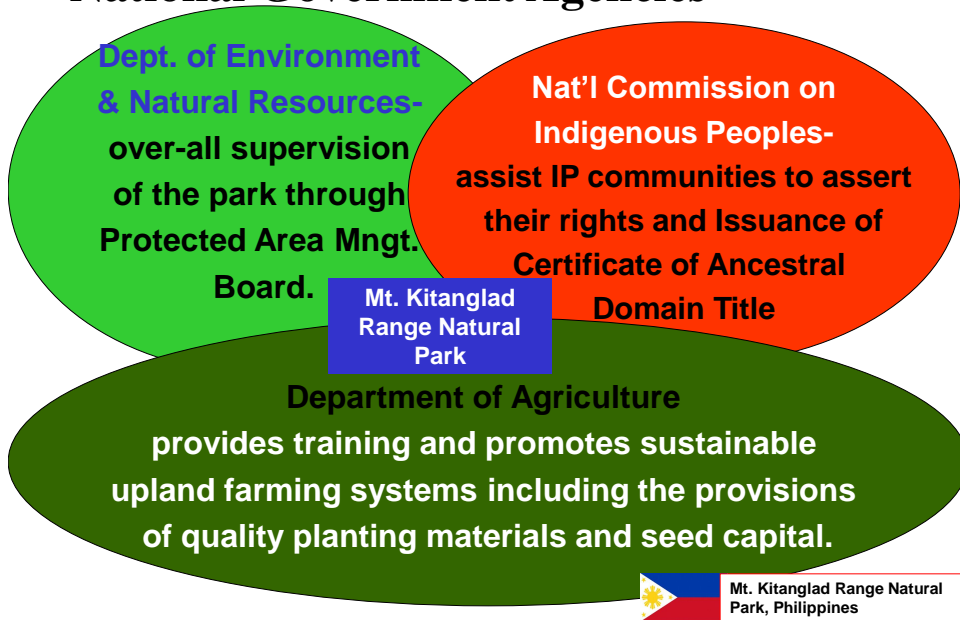
- *passage of ordinance and
funding support amounting to
US\$ 134,000 (6 million pesos)
from year 2002 to 2003.*



Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural
Park, Philippines

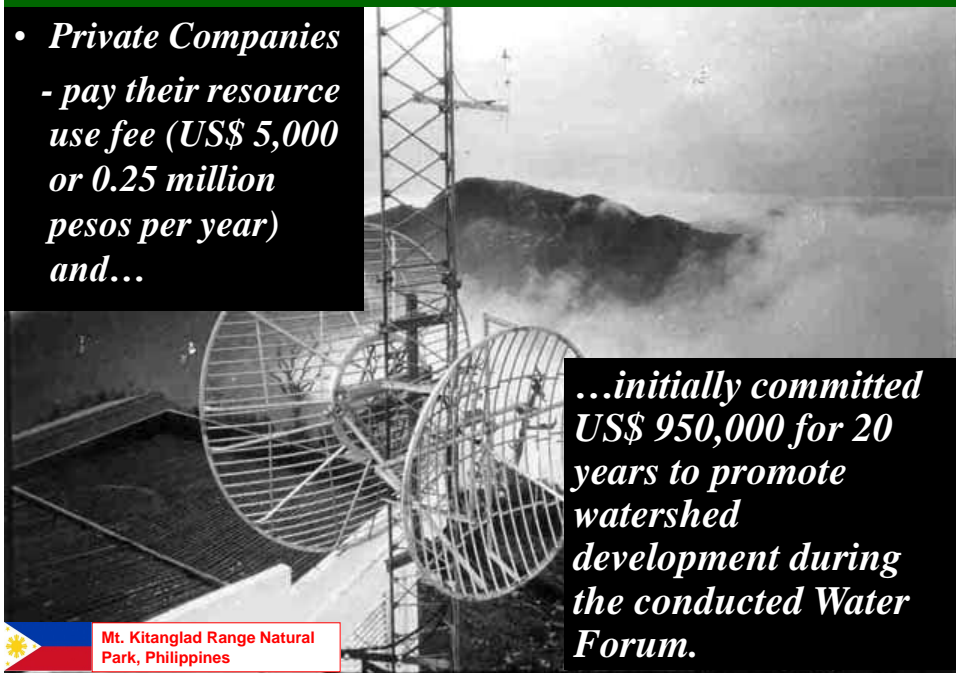
Roles of other Stakeholders

- **National Government Agencies**



Roles of other Stakeholders

- *Private Companies*
- pay their resource use fee (US\$ 5,000 or 0.25 million pesos per year) and...



...initially committed US\$ 950,000 for 20 years to promote watershed development during the conducted Water Forum.

Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural Park, Philippines

Issues and Problems of Decentralization



Issues and problems of Decentralization

** Misrepresentation of Protected Area*



*Management Board
(PAMB) membership
by people close
to politicians and
other influential
persons.*



Issues and problems of Decentralization

♥ *Insensitivity to the local culture*

During PAMB meetings...

...Most members speak English

***...Decide by majority votes while IPs
decide by consensus***

***...Meetings conducted at barangays
while they live in the sitios (small
villages)***



Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural
Park, Philippines

Issues and problems of Decentralization



***Unwritten laws
(customary law) are
prone to abuse by
educated members of
the tribe.***



Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural
Park, Philippines

Issues and problems of Decentralization

- *Some tribal leaders are not in speaking terms with the government due to failure to issue Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title (CADT) and settle cultural penalty.*



Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural
Park, Philippines

Result of Decentralization



Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural
Park, Philippines

Result of Decentralization

Improves forest protection works and natural resource management due to increased presence on the ground resulting from strong partnership with Local Government Units and local communities. Likewise due to the ...

...the vital role of the Kitanglad Guard Volunteers (KGVs),

...Community Based Forest Management (CBFM) communities, and

...Protected Area Management Board (PAMB).



Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural Park, Philippines

Result of Decentralization

- *Livelihood assistance, fund generation strengthened and linkages with international funding institution.*



Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural Park, Philippines

Result of Decentralization

- *Local governments' role in protected area management strengthened.*




Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural Park, Philippines

Lessons Learned



Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural Park, Philippines

Lessons Learned

 *First, park management can be implemented successfully by changing the locus of decision-making from national agencies to*




*local levels
emphasizing
multi-sectoral
participation.*



Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural
Park, Philippines

Lessons Learned


 *Second, decentralization of protected area management is not mainly the domain of local governments.*

The main essence of decentralization provides for the participation of stakeholders such as NGOs, local communities, tribal groups and complimentary projects. Decentralization promotes local empowerment.



Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural
Park, Philippines

Lessons Learned


 *Third, the Kitanglad experience points out that decentralizing park area management does not merely mean devolving responsibilities previously concentrated within the national bureaucracy such as the DENR.*

It accompanies the devolution of decision-making authority to various stakeholders.

Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural
Park, Philippines



Lessons Learned

 *Lastly, there is no ready-made template in park management.*

Our experiences demonstrate that sensitivity and recognition of cultural tradition and local knowledge as well as flexibility to negotiate with various stakeholders can sustain many of these initiatives.

Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural
Park, Philippines



Recommendation



Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural
Park, Philippines

RECOMMENDATION

- *There should be a convergence of these policies/laws in the field to ensure mutually supported development process.*
- *At the minimum, a mechanism for convergence should be institutionalized.*

A chilly morning on a road leading to Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural Park.



Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural
Park, Philippines

RECOMMENDATION

•Focus on the capacity development needs of the local community.



Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural
Park, Philippines